

South Lake Union Neighborhood Notes

January 9, 2003

10:00-12:00 AM

Susan Jurasz, Peter Reedijk, Catherine McCoy, Kathy Hocker

The true boundaries of South Lake Union neighborhood extend slightly north of our survey boundaries on the west side of the lake (we stopped our survey at Highland Drive).

We drove the perimeter first, taking pictures of entrances. Then we drove the interior streets in a grid pattern from east to west, documenting signage and taking notes on neighborhood character.

Summary

South Lake Union has the feel of an industrial zone that is, in some areas, becoming gentrified. In general, terrain is flat, and streets are laid out in a regular grid pattern (this breaks down somewhat near the waterfront). Industries here include manufacturing, automotive repair, auto sales, and salvage. On the east, upscale apartment buildings are moving in. Along the waterfront are marinas, restaurants, and yacht sales businesses. In the northeastern corner is a large complex of medical research facilities.

Landmarks include the big Pepsi sign on Aurora Ave. N., the former City Light and Power building (now Zymogenetics) on Eastlake [this building is actually just outside of the neighborhood], and REI's towering, glass-enclosed climbing wall on Eastlake between Thomas and John.

Observations

Perimeter and Entrances
Westlake and Dexter are major entrances from the north. Westlake in particular is a busy street, and has a pleasant view of the lake.

Mercer (a one-way street) seems to be the most important entrance from the west; Broad Street enters at close to the same point. Aloha, Republican, Harrison, Thomas, and John Streets are minor entrances. All of these pass into the neighborhood through stolid industrial buildings. The lake itself is not visible from any of these entrances (except Aloha).

The biggest southern entrances are Dexter, Westlake, and Fairview Ave. N. There are minor entrances at Terry and Boren.

This edge of South Lake Union features Denny Park and Denny Playfield, the Seattle Times complex of buildings, and Greyhound Maintenance Department.

Along Eastlake are four minor entrances: Stewart St., Thomas, Harrison, and Republican. The Mercer Street Interchange brings traffic from I-5 directly into the heart of the neighborhood.

In the northeast, Eastlake Ave. E. and Fairview Ave. N. lead into the neighborhood through the medical-research complex of Zymogenetics, the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center, and the Cancer Care Alliance.

Interior streets

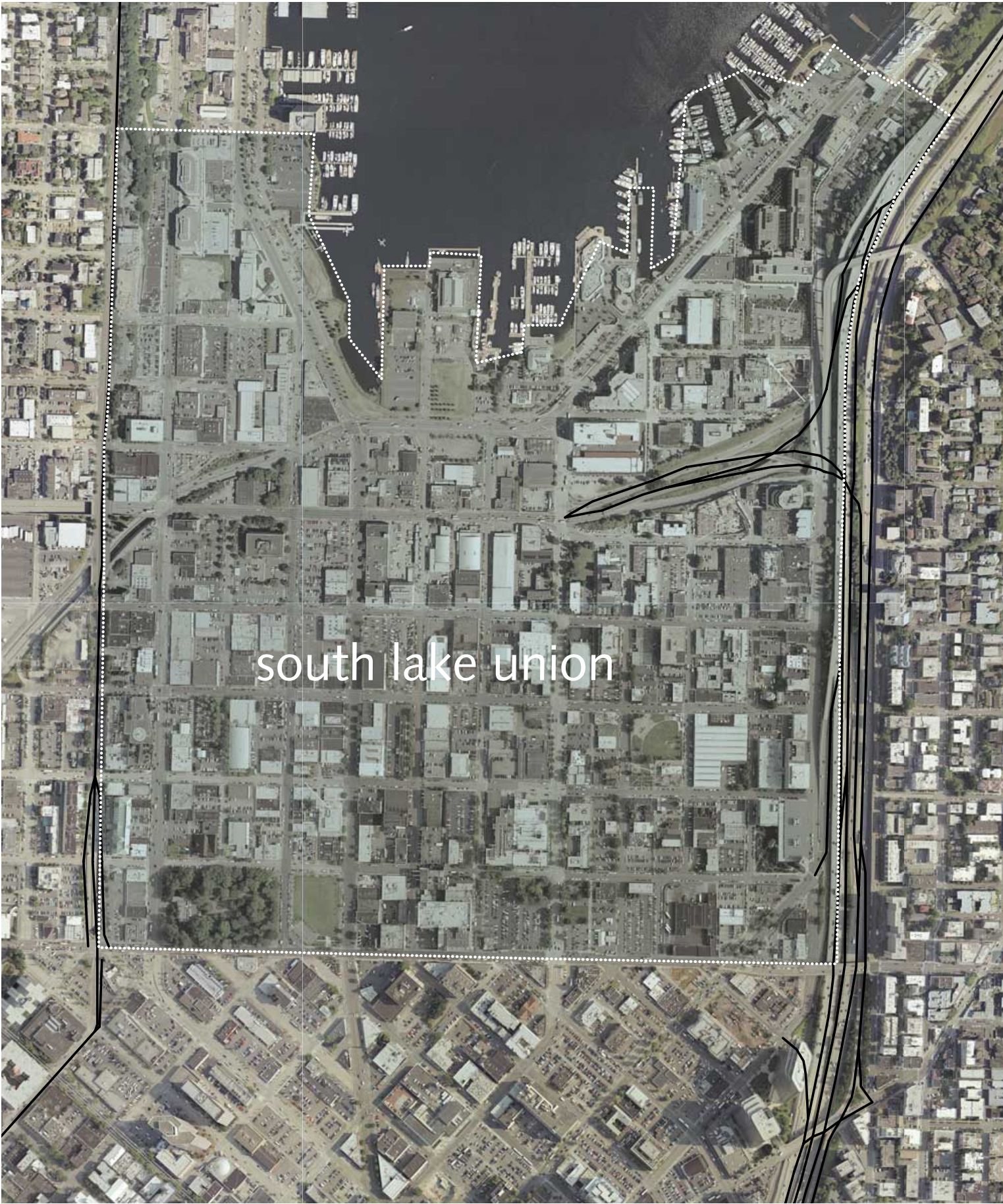
The South Lake Union neighborhood has several subsections, each with a fairly distinct architectural and cultural feel.

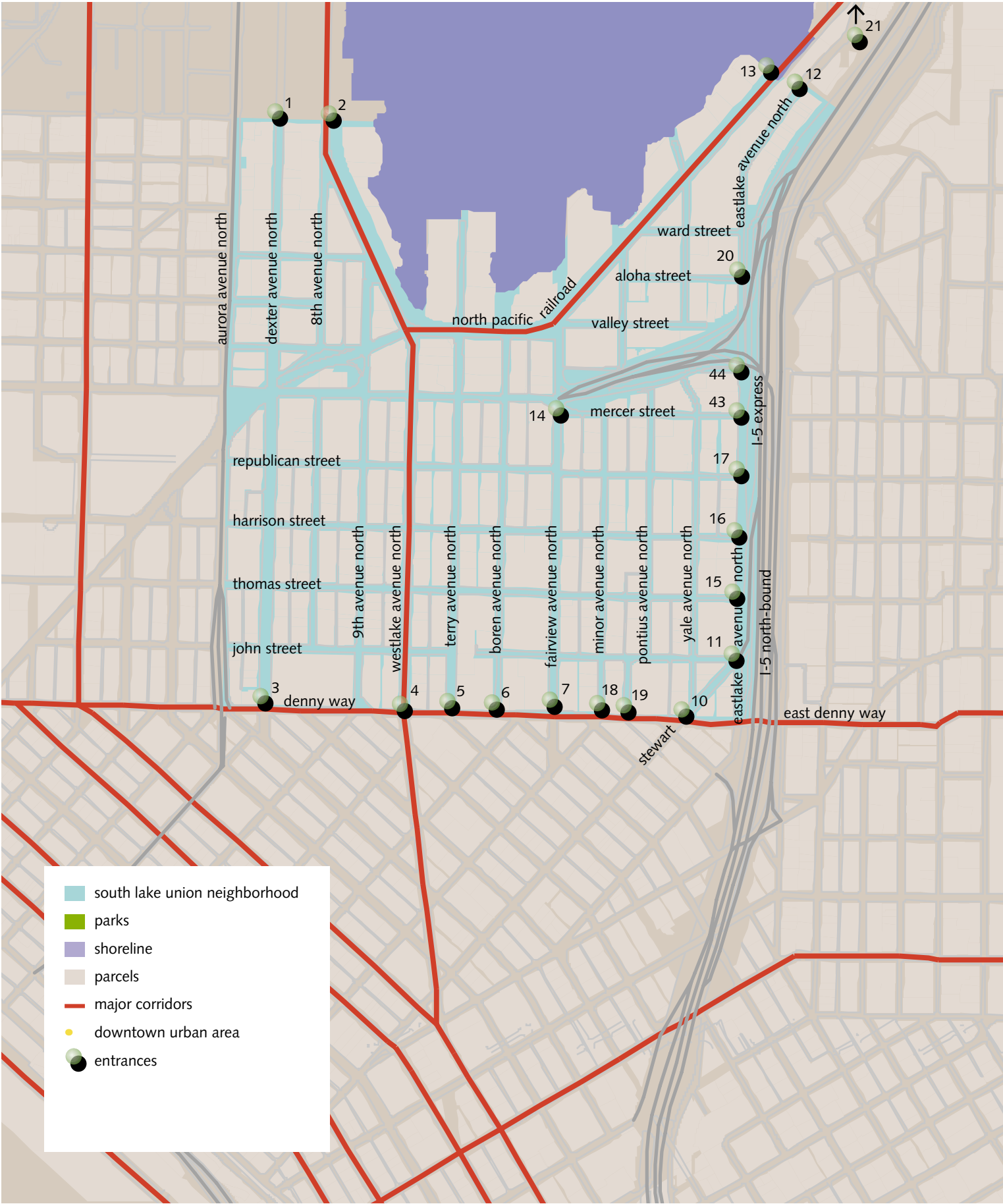
Along the waterfront, between Fairview Ave. N./Valley St./Westlake Ave. N. and Lake Union, are a series of marinas, pricey seafood restaurants, yacht sales businesses, and seaplane and boat tour operators. South Lake Union Park is a welcome green space, and contains the Marine Heritage Center.

In the northeast corner, from the border south to Mercer Street, the primary industry is medical research, with associated support businesses such as hotels.

The southeast corner (east of Westlake Ave N. and south of Mercer Street) appears to share some characteristics with bordering neighborhoods Capitol Hill and Denny Triangle. Many of the buildings appear to have started as warehouses and factories, but have been converted to studios and stores. Other buildings are new. There are newer apartment buildings, a couple of schools, a charming community garden (the Cascade Pea Patch), and REI. Minor and Fairview are “shop streets.”

West of Westlake the neighborhood retains a no-nonsense, industrial feel.





1 dexter/highland



2 westlake/highland



3 denny/dexter



4 denny/westlake



5 denny/terry



6 denny/boren



7 denny/fairview



10 denny/stewart



11 eastlake/stewart



12 eastlake/nelson



13 eastlake/fairview



14 mercer/fairview



15 eastlake/thomas



16 eastlake/harrison



17 eastlake/republican



20 eastlake/aloha



21 eastlake/fairview



18 denny/minor



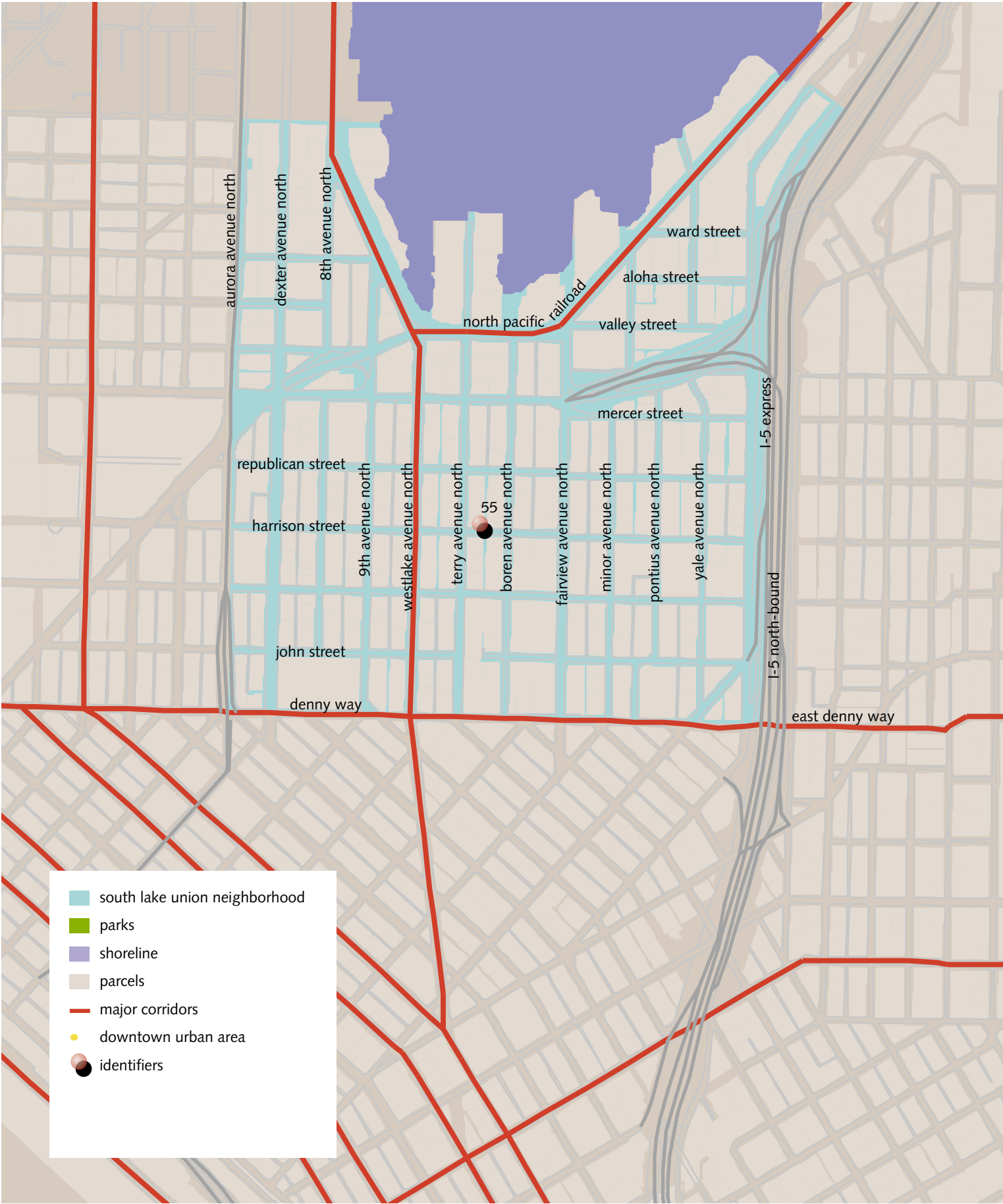
119 denny/pontius



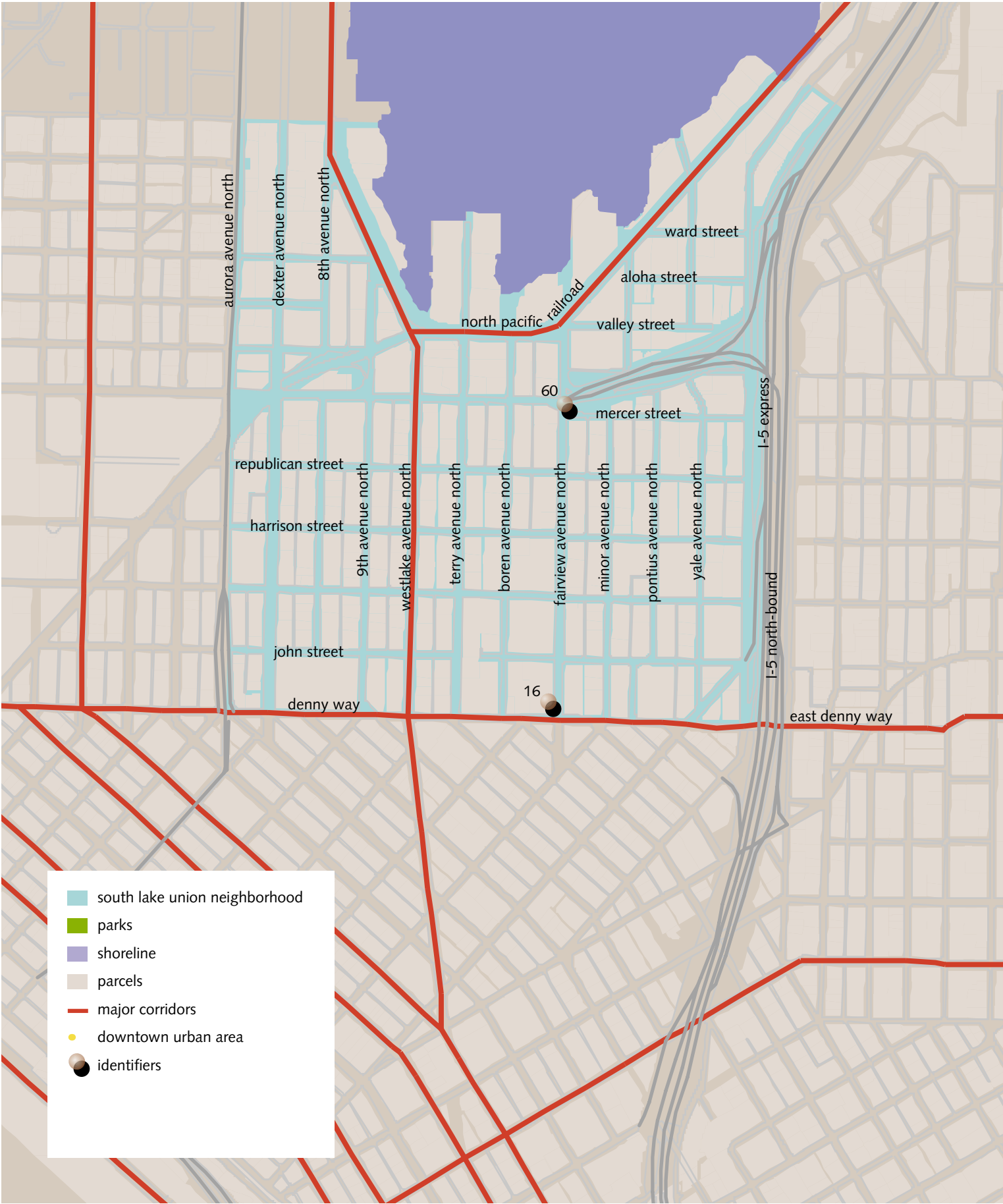
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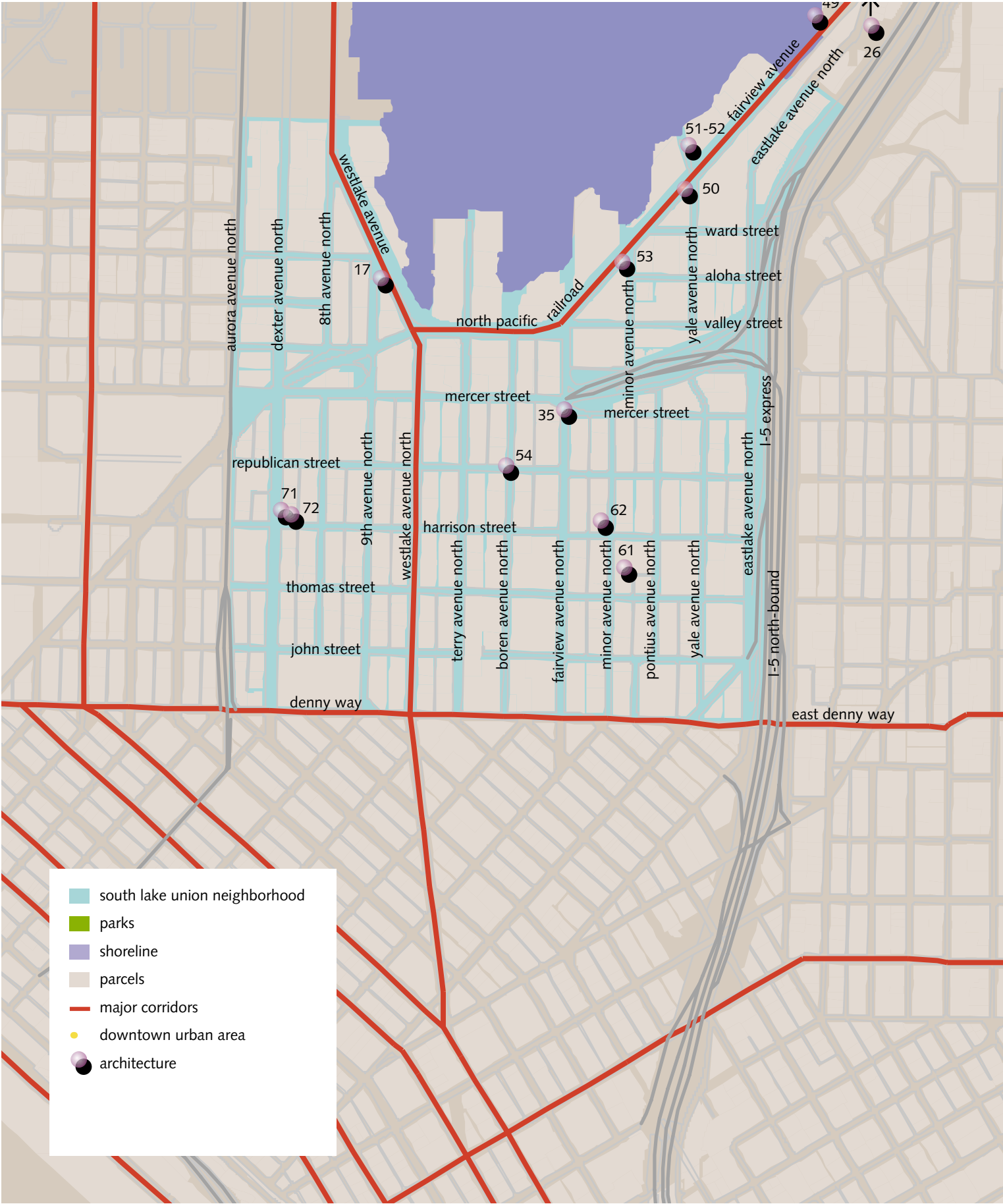
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51-52



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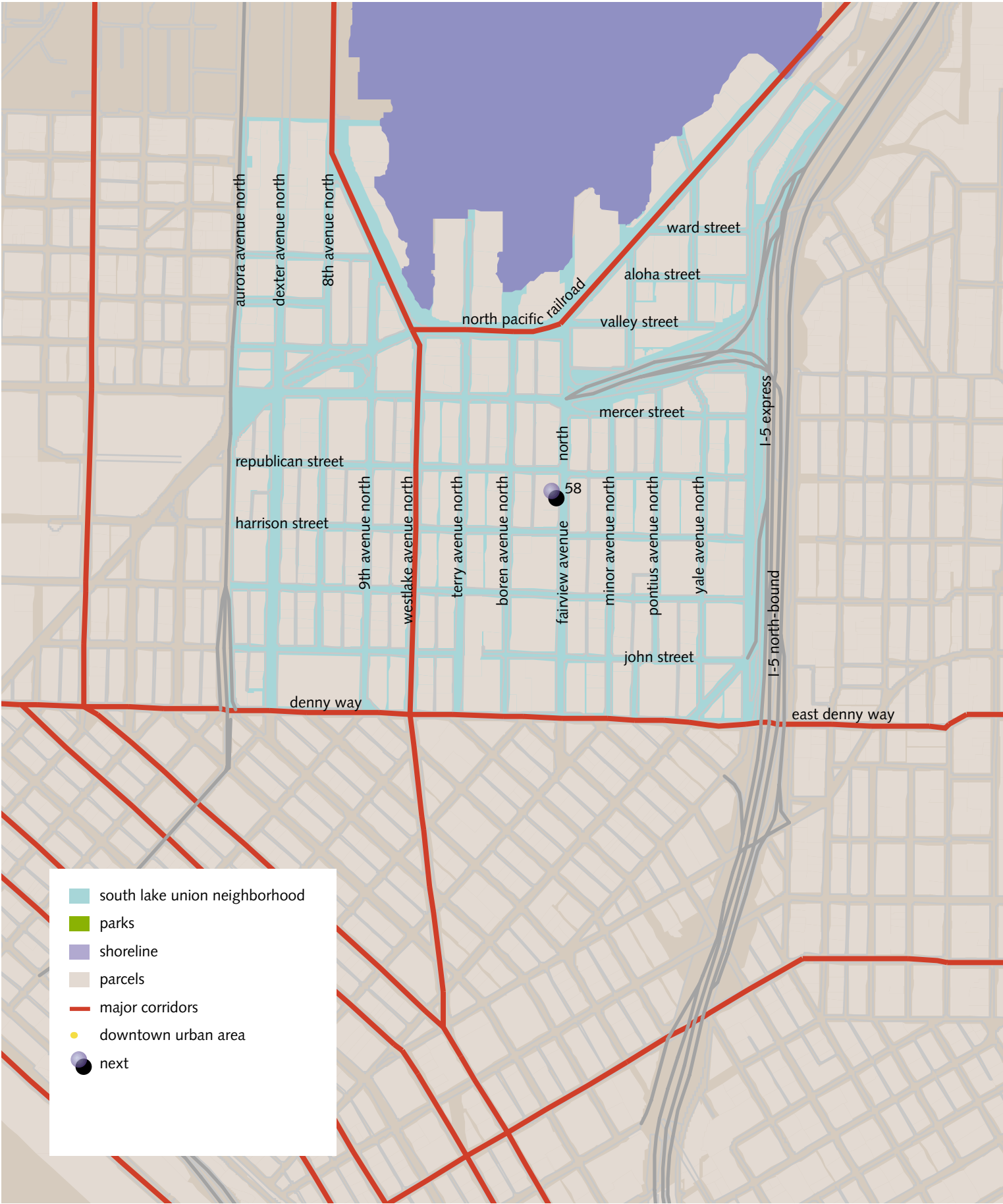
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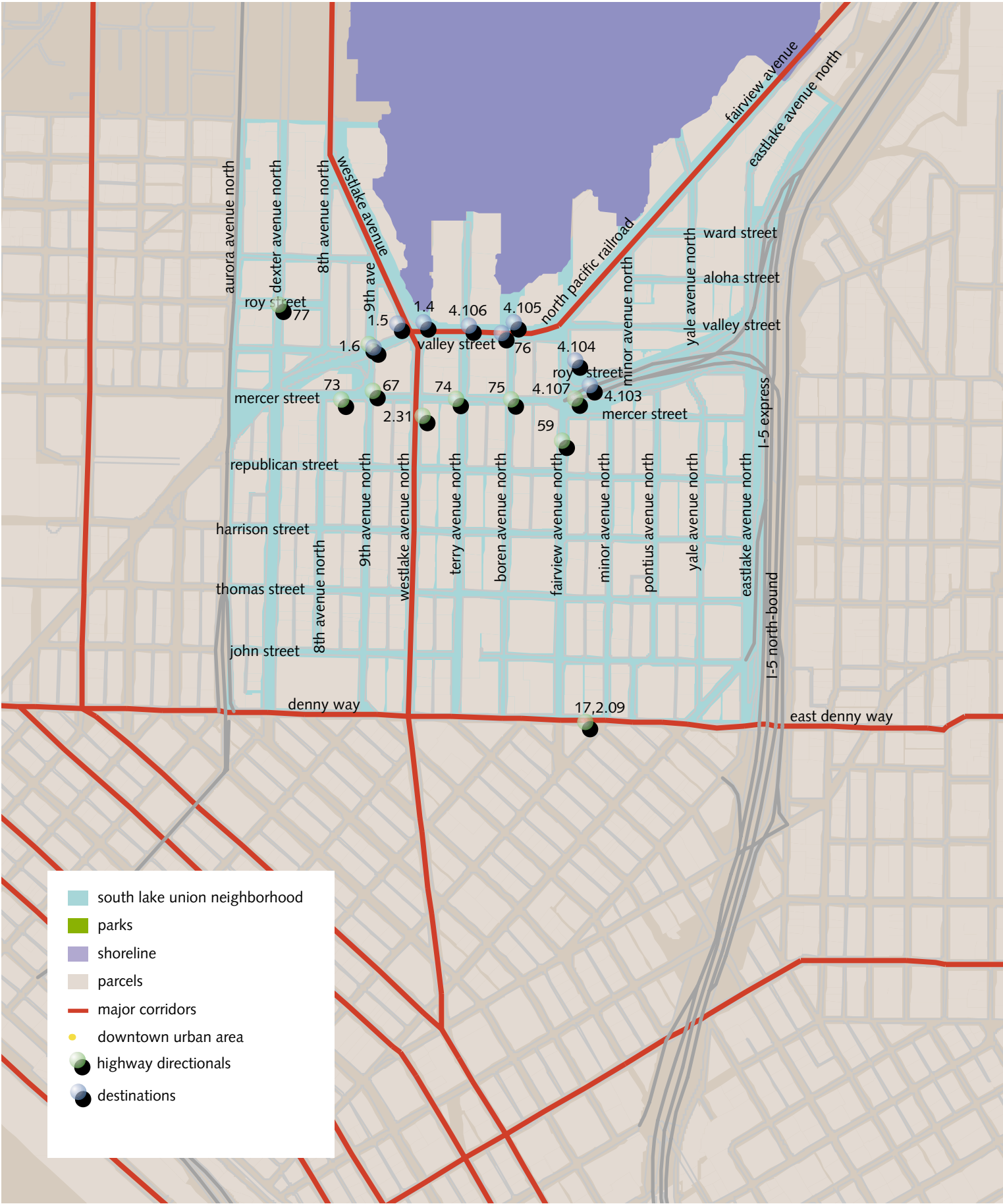
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72



58 capital hill next



1.4



1.5



1.6



2.31



4.103



4.104



4.105



4.106



4.107



17



59



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73



74



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